

Jones House

By:

Dale C. Maley



Jones House

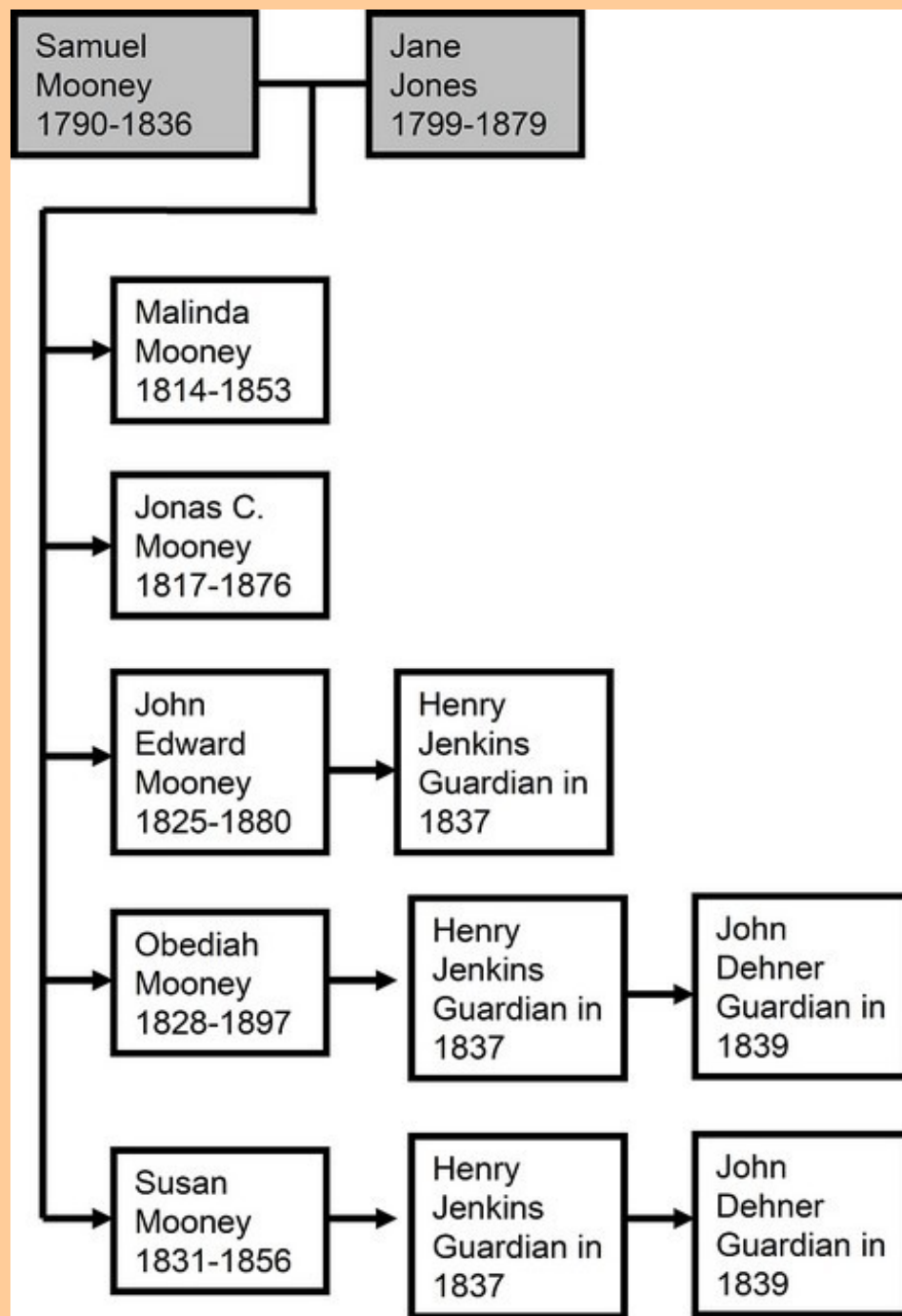
- Samuel Mooney was born on December 11, 1790, in Ohio.
- Jane Jones was born in 1799 in Kentucky.
- Samuel Mooney married Jane Jones around 1818 in Ohio.
- Samuel was 27 and Jane was 19 years of age when they married.
- Samuel and Jane Mooney had many children.
- Unfortunately, Samuel Mooney died on April 5, 1836 at the age of 45 in Carroll County, Indiana.

Cause of death not known.

Jones House

- Widow Jane Mooney had to raise 5 children under the age of 18 when her husband died.
- Eight months after her husband died, Jane Mooney married John Dehner.
- John was born in 1807 in Prussia. John Dehner emigrated from Prussia to Indiana in 1835. In 1871, Prussia became part of Germany.
- On December 13, 1836, John Dehner married the widow Jane Mooney in Carroll County, Indiana. John was 29 and Jane was 37 years of age when they married.

Jones House



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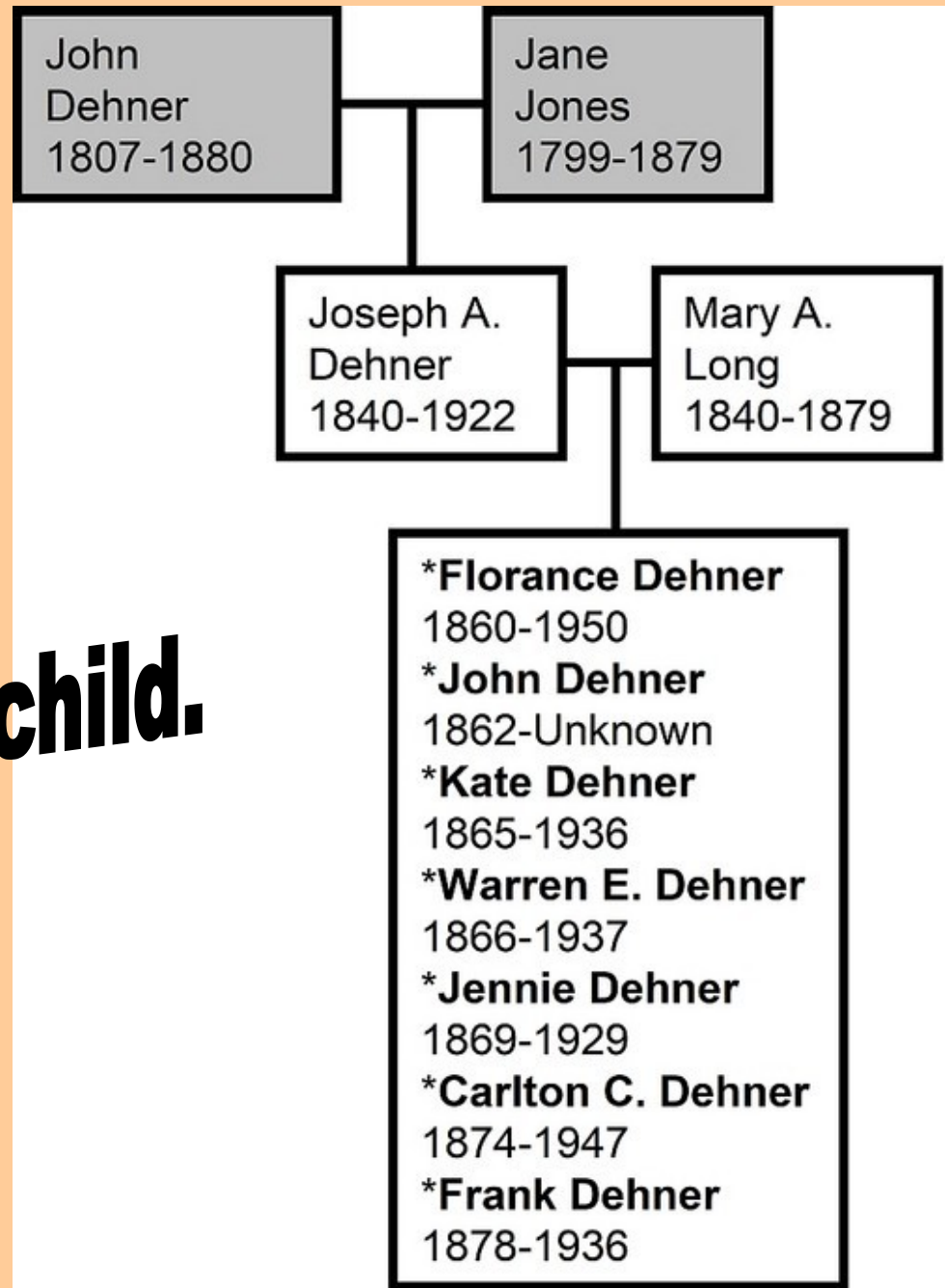
John Dehner Indiana Land Purchases

- According to the U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Land Management online database, John Dehner purchased seven different tracts of land in Carroll County, Indiana, in 1837 and 1838.
- These land purchases totaled 600 acres and he paid cash for the land as opposed to using military veteran land patents.

Must have saved his money in Prussia?

Jones House

John Dehner had 1 child.



Jones House

John Dehner Family Moves to Pontiac

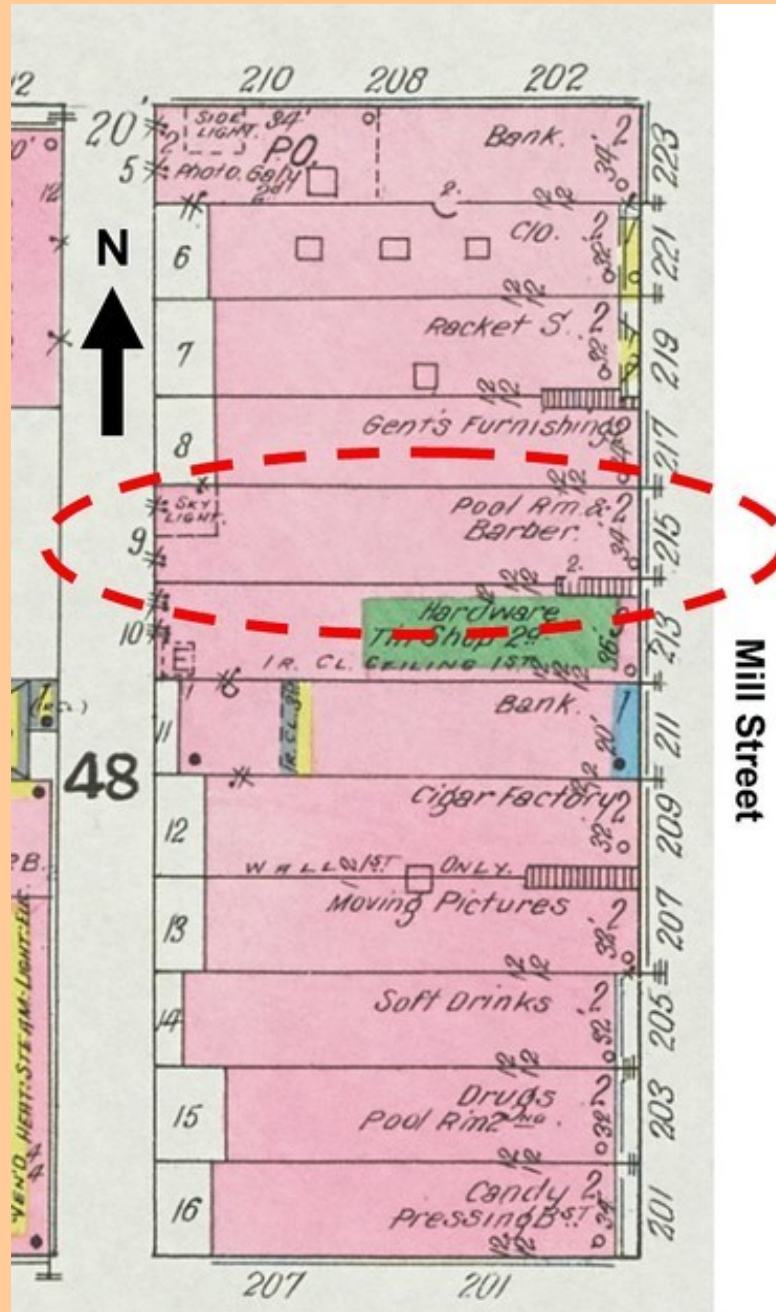
- Sometime between 1850 and 1857, the John Dehner family moved from Tippecanoe County, Indiana, to Pontiac, Illinois.
- According to the old property tax records in the basement of the Historic Courthouse, John Dehner purchased the land in Block 51 Lot 2 of the original village of Pontiac.
- This lot was later assigned the street address of 314 E. Madison St. in Pontiac.
- Data indicates that John Dehner built a house on this lot in 1857 and 1858.

Jones House

John Dehner and Job Dye Go Into Business in Early 1857

- On February 13, 1857, John Dehner and Job Dye purchased a store building on the west side of the square, about where the Clothes Closet is located, lot nine in block forty-eight, in consideration of two hundred and thirty dollars.
- John Dehner and Job E. Dye were partners in a dry goods business store known as Dehner & Co.
- There is a possibility that a relationship existed between the Dehner and Dye families.

Jones House



John
Dehner's
business.

Shown on
1888 &
1910
Sanborn
maps

Jones House

1860 Census

- In the 1860 Census, John Dehner and his wife Jane lived at Pontiac, Illinois.
- John listed his occupation as a merchant.
- John owned \$16,000 of real estate and had a personal estate of \$12,000.
- His net worth of \$28,000 would be equivalent to \$936,000 in today's dollars.

Jones House



- During Civil War, coins became rare. Merchants could not make change, so they issued tokens as change.

Jones House



- Token donated to Historical Society

- Oak display box & sign by Dale C. Maley

- On display at Jones House

Jones House

•John Dehner Involved with Building First Livingston County Jail in 1866

NOTICE TO CONTRACTORS.

Sealed proposals for the building of a jail 88x47 ft., two stories high, with basement, for the County of Livingston, Ill., will be received at the office of the County Clerk, in Pontiac, in said county, up to 2 o'clock p.m., of Tuesday, April 10, 1866, said building to be of Joliet stone, and containing 12 cells. Contractors to furnish all material and have the work completed by the first day of October next, under bonds the committee reserving the right to reject any or all bids. Plans and specifications can be seen at the office of the County Clerk on and after the 21st of March.

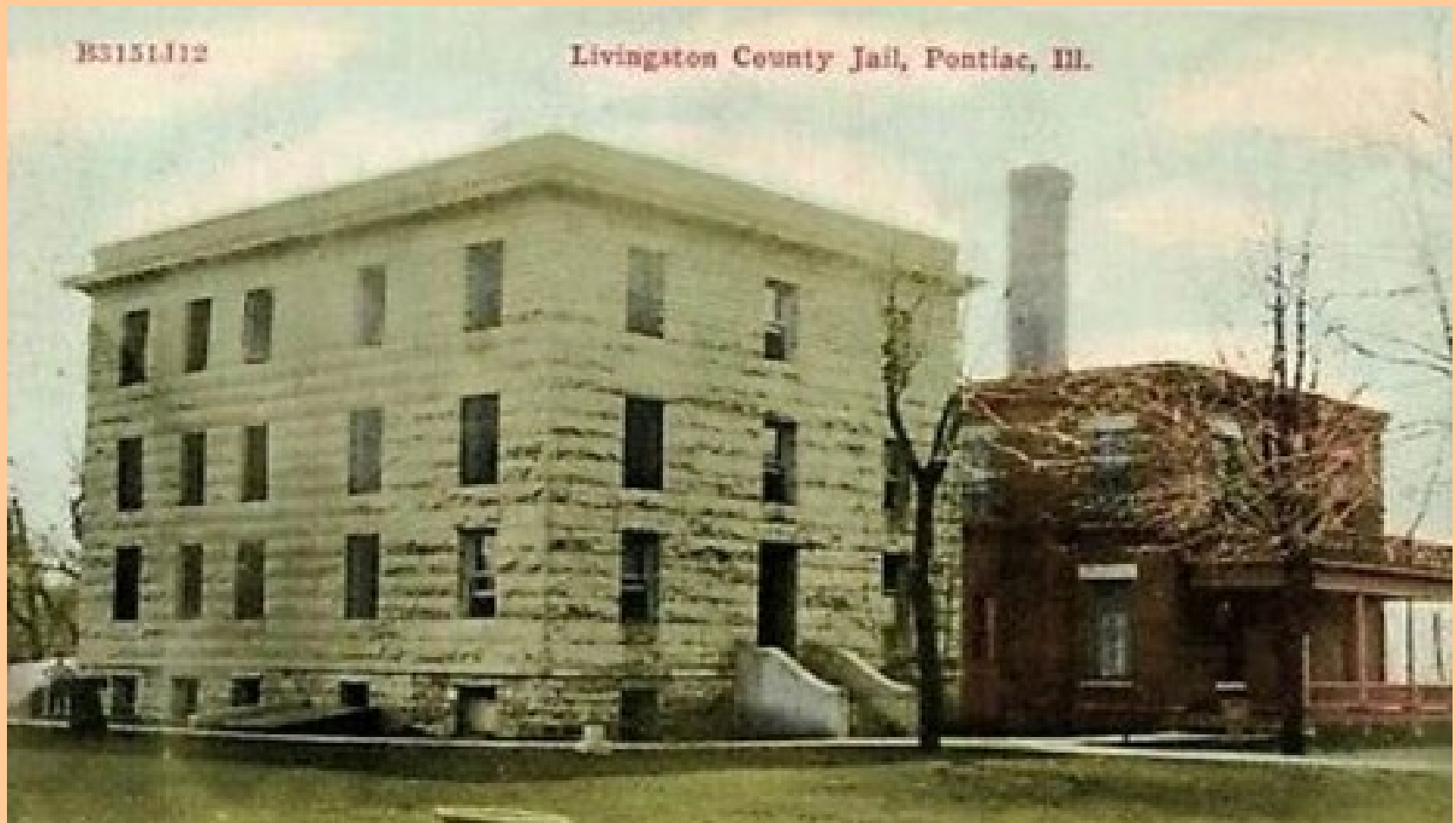
John Dehner

R. F. Hotchkiss Building Committee

R. R. Harrington

Pontiac, Ill., March 9, 1866

Jones House



Jones House



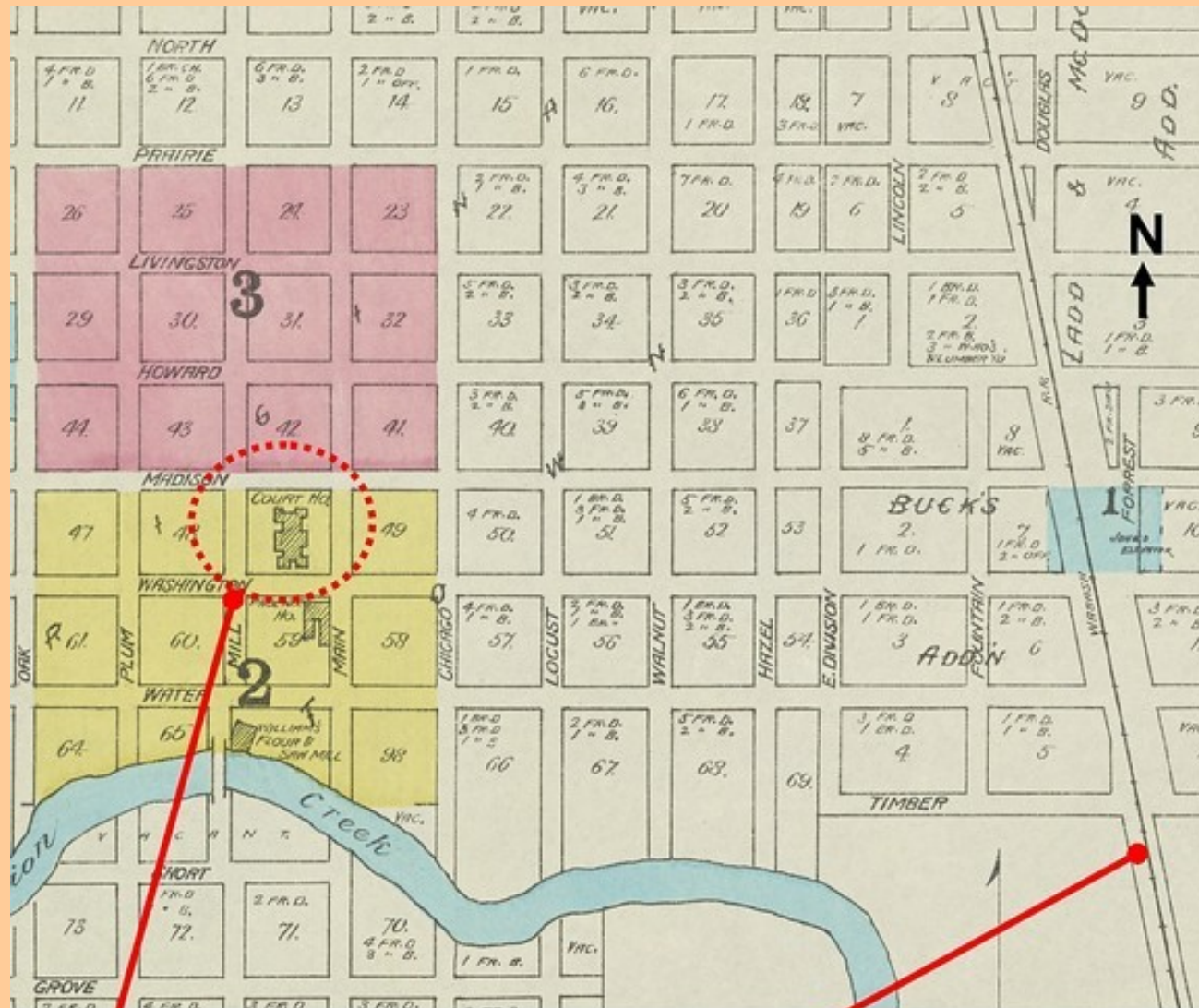
Torn down in May of 2017.

Jones House

- John Dehner helped get a 2nd railroad for Pontiac

The Fairbury, Pontiac, and Northwestern Railway Company Eventually Became the Chicago & Paducah Railroad

Jones House

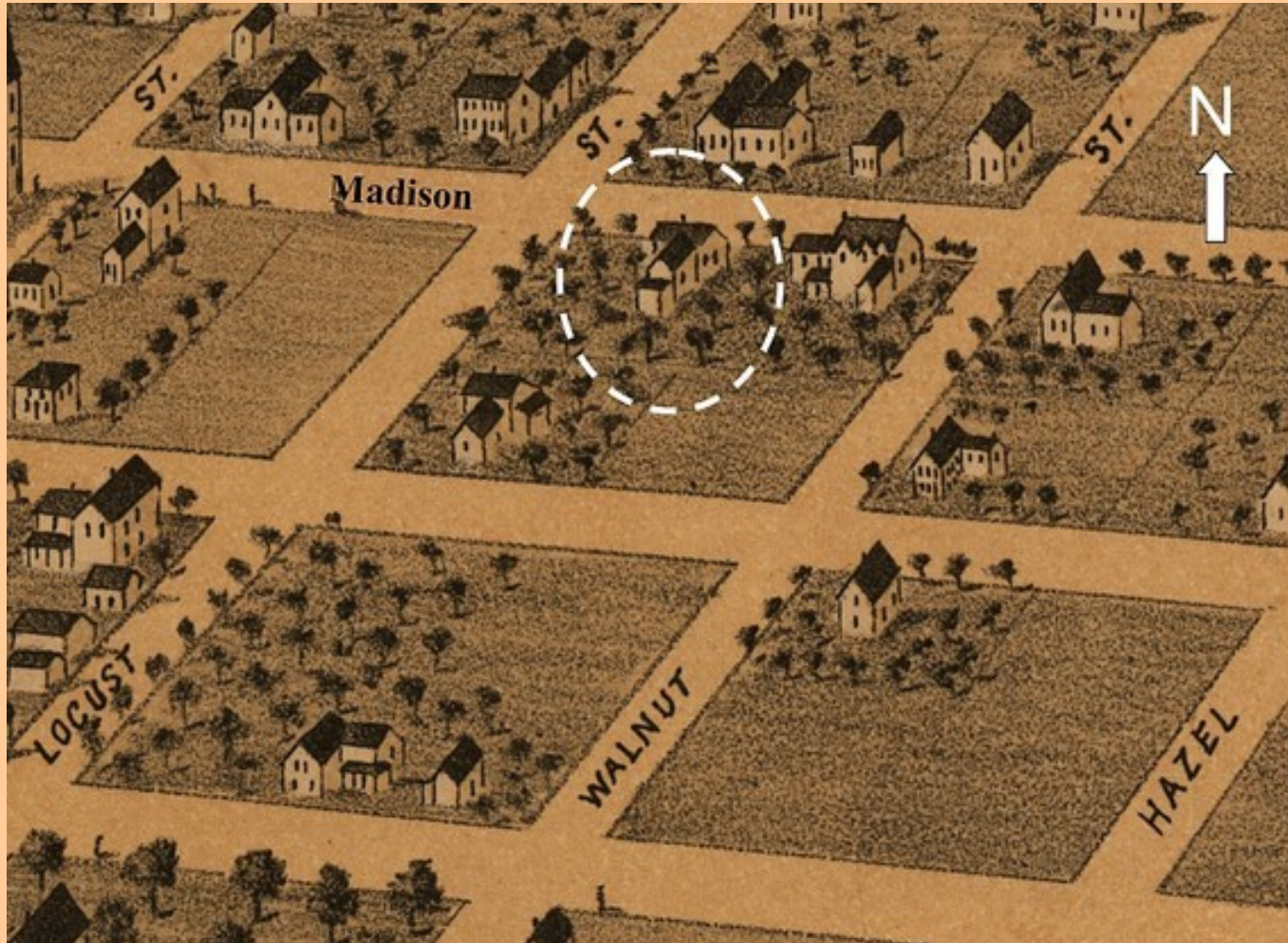


Old Courthouse

Wabash RR, was originally the
Chicago & Paducah RR

Jones House

- Jones House on the 1869 Bird's Eye View of Pontiac Map



Strevell House also shown on this map.

Jones House

The 1871 John Dehner Advertisement

Great Closing Out Sale

OF FANCY AND STAPLE

DRY GOODS!

I have just received from the East a large and well selected stock of goods which I am desirous of closing out, and shall sell them at prices that will defy all competition,

REGARDLESS OF COST!

Situated as I am, with no rent to pay, less than half the insurance of most dealers, I think I can safely say that I can offer

Greater Inducements

To all parties, than any house outside of Chicago. My goods are all selected with care in regard to style and quality, by competent men who have a thorough knowledge of the business, and are fully conversant with the wants of this community, and from my rapidly increasing trade I am fully convinced that my efforts to please my patrons is not altogether unappreciated. My stock consists in part of a full line of

**DRESS GOODS, WHITE GOODS,
AND
STAPLE COTTONS**

of every description. A full line of
Pontiac & Bloomington Flannels,
which must and will be sold at
Bottom Figures.

Pants stuffs, Jeans, of the best quality, and very low Tickings, Denims, Stripe Shirtings and a full line of Notions, Trimmings and Ribbons, Nublas, Woolen Hoods, beautiful new style Double Shawls. The attention of the ladies is earnestly solicited to the above department.

In connection I also keep a full line of

BOOTS AND SHOES,

Of the best make, at **VERY LOW PRICES.**

Also, a heavy stock of all kinds of
Groceries,

Crockery,

Earthenware,

Woodenware,

Baskets, etc.,

All are respectfully invited to call and examine my stock, as it is considered a pleasure as well as a duty on the part of my salesmen to show goods to all who may favor them with a call.

I also tender my sincere thanks to my friends who have bestowed upon me such liberal patronage for the past two years, and hope I may still continue to merit the same.

JOHN DEHNER.

N. B. - All kinds Country Produce taken in exchange for Goods. Call at 39, west side of the court house square, next door to the Bank.

Pontiac, Illinois, October 4th, 1871

Jones House

1875 Railroad Map Showing Two Railroads Going Through Pontiac



- Strawn branch removed just 2 years after laid
- Chicago & Paduch RR ran through the farm of John Bodley – GG Grandfather of Dale C. Maley

Things Start to go Bad in 1875

- August 26, 1875, Chicago Daily Tribune
 - Joseph Dehner, son of John Dehner declares bankruptcy
- September 8, 1875, Chicago Daily Tribune
 - Chenoa grain mill owned by John Dehner burns
 - Insurance only covered $\frac{1}{2}$ of the loss

State Asylum for Pontiac

- Jason Strevell helped to get the Boy's Reformatory built in Pontiac
- John Dehner help prepared land proposals for new State Asylum to be built in Pontiac ~1877
- Lost the contest => Built in Lincoln, Illinois

John Dehner Family Moves to Missouri in 1878

- In 1878, John Dehner was 71 years of age.
- His wife, Jane Dehner, was 79 years of age.

John Dehner's Wife Died 1879

- Jane Jones, wife of John Dehner, died on October 10, 1879, in Carthage, Missouri.
- Mrs. Dehner was 80 years of age when she died.
- Husband John Dehner was 72 years old when his wife died.

John Dehner Commits Suicide in Missouri in 1880

- Just 11 months after his wife died, John Dehner died on September 24, 1880, in Pierce City, Missouri at the age of 73.
- He was buried in Park Cemetery in Carthage, Missouri.

Suicide discovered doing book research

Why did John Dehner Commit Suicide?

- His son had financial problems.
- John Dehner may have had financial problems also.
- Was not the same after his wife died 11 months before.
- Checked into Missouri hotel under assumed name
- Took poison.

Why did John Dehner Commit Suicide?

- His oldest son, Joe, caused him some financial trouble and worriness of mind later on in life, and some three year ago he removed his family to Missouri, hoping that Joe would do better *if removed from his old temptations.*

I wonder why type of temptations did son Joseph Dehner have???

- Son Joseph Dehner died at age 82 in Kansas.
- Buried in Missouri where father buried.

John Dehner

Dehner family story completed.

The Jones Family Story Begins

- Judge Henry Jones and his son Henry C. Jones came to Livingston County around 1846.

Henry Jones
1812-1893

Emily DeMoss
1810-1878

Rebecca Jones
1833-Before 1912

Amos McPherson
1830-Unknown

Martha A. Jones
1834-1912

George Ball Foster
1824-1888

Malinda J. Jones
1835-1909

Charles L. Paige Sr.
1838-1864

Henry C. Jones
1838-1921

Mary A. Bancroft
1852-1942

Elvina Aliza Jones
1839-1922

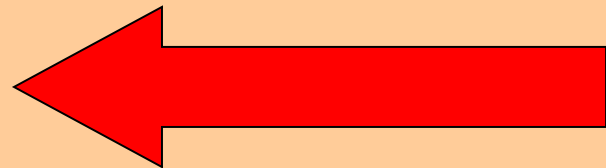
Mark A. Renoe
1833-1919

John W. Jones
1843-Unknown

Nancy J. Mortland
1844-Unknown

James H. Jones
1850-1889

Rachel Skinner
1856-Unknown



Henry Jones Elected County Commissioner in 1848

Henry Jones Bitten by the California Gold Bug

In 1849, the names and ages of the members of the Henry and Emily Jones family are shown below.

Henry Jones 37.

Emily Jones 39

Rebecca Jones 16.

Martha A. Jones 15.

Malinda J. Jones 14.

Henry C. Jones 11.

Elvina Jones 10

John W. Jones 6

James H. Jones Newborn

Henry Jones Bitten by the California Gold Bug

- Henry Jones was bitten by the Gold Bug and he convinced his wife to let him go to California to prospect for gold, leaving her to raise the 7 children noted above.
- Emily Jones and her 7 children went to live with her parents in their household while Henry Jones was gone to California.



Henry Jones Bitten by the California Gold Bug

- Henry Jones and 2 partners go to California in 1849
- Strike it rich, “Enough gold to buy a whole township of land in Pontiac.”

36 Square Miles!

- Sailed from San Francisco to Mexico
- Robbed by Mexican bandits while walking in Mexico
- Rest of gold stolen from their room on steamboat on the Mississippi River
- Got to Pontiac 2 years after leaving with no money!

2nd Expedition to California in 1852

- 4 men make the trip
- Found gold and brought it back to Pontiac
- Henry Jones built first brick commercial building in Pontiac
- Became a Livingston County Judge (with no law degree)

3rd Expedition to California in 1859

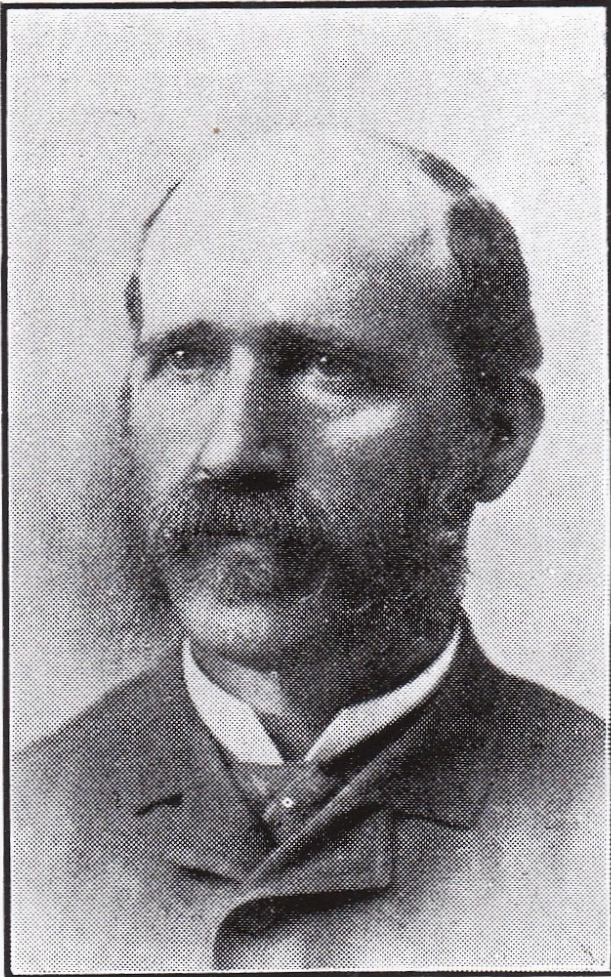
- Judge Henry Jones resigned as County Judge
- 16 men make the trip including son Henry C. Jones
- Found some gold
- Judge Henry Jones remained in California the rest of his life
- Son Henry C. Jones returned to Pontiac in 1863

3rd Expedition to California in 1859

- In July, 1873, H. C. Jones became sole proprietor, and changed the name again to the ***Sentinel***, and in 1875, sold to F. L. Alles, who still owns and edits it.
- Ownership returned to Henry C. Jones again

Henry C. Jones owed the Sentinel for ~9 years.

Henry C. Jones Marries in 1872 in Pontiac



H. C. JONES



H. C. JONES

Colorized
by
Fotor.com

B&W photo found in 2024 in War Museum Safe

Henry C. Jones Marries in 1872 in Pontiac

- In September of 1872, Henry C. Jones married Mary A. Bancroft in Pontiac.
- She was the daughter of Luther R. Bancroft (1814-1892) and Jane Wanzer (1812-1858).
- Henry C. Jones was 34 and Jane was 20 years of age when they married.
- They had no children of their own....they adopted 3 children

Henry C. Jones Adopted Children

- They adopted Charles Jones who was born around 1876.
- He is listed as living with Henry and Mary Jones in Dallas, Texas, in the 1880 U.S. Census.
- Details about his life, including his death date are unknown at this time.
- Henry and Mary Jones adopted a daughter they named Helen M. Jones. Her birth date is unknown and she died on August 7, 1884, in Shasta, California.

Henry C. Jones Adopted Children

3rd Child

- Henry and Mary Jones adopted another daughter they named Nellie A. Jones.
- She was born in 1885 in Illinois.
- She married Roy G. Hershey in November of 1910 in Pontiac. She was a school teacher in Livingston County.
- Nellie died in May of 1944 in Pontiac. Nellie and Roy Hershey had no children.
- Nellie's first name is sometimes spelled "Nellie" and in other sources is spelled "Nelle."

Texas & California

- Henry Jones sold his Pontiac newspaper and moved to Texas in 1875.
- He was engaged in the selling supplies to newspapers in the Dallas area
- Successful business selling supplies to 262 papers
- Because of his wife's ill health, he sold his business in Texas moved to a valuable prune ranch in California

Henry C. Jones Back to Pontiac

- In 1892 Mr. Jones returned to Pontiac and acquired a three-fifths interest in the electric light plant, having helped to develop the enterprise.
- This company was incorporated as the Pontiac Light, Heat & Power Company, and has grown to large proportions.
- Mr. Jones served as its president for seven years, though he recently sold his interest in the same.

Henry C. Jones Purchases Jones House in 1899

- Henry C. Jones purchased lots one and two from Philip Arman on August 5, 1899.
- At that point in time, Henry had attained the age of 61
- Although Henry may have had several interest, ice had a strong appeal.
- He and James Bancroft, his brother-in-law, formed a partnership known as Jones and Bancroft, operators of the Pontiac Ice Company.
- The company had an ice house on East Park Street, near the northeast corner of Chautauqua Park, and a downtown office.

Henry C. Jones Purchases Jones House in 1899

•1900 U.S. Census

- Henry C. Jones lived at 314 E. Madison Street in Pontiac and he was 61 years old.
- His wife, Mary Jones, age 48, was living with him.
- They reported that two children lived with them. Nellie Jones and Henry Jones were both 15 years old in this Census.
- Henry C. Jones reported his occupation as a capitalist. He reported that he had a mortgage on the house.

Henry C. Jones Purchases Jones House in 1899

•1910 U.S. Census

- Henry C. Jones reported that he was 72 years old and he was the proprietor of an ice company.
- He still had a mortgage on his house.
- His wife, Mary A. Jones was age 57.
- On the census form, they listed Nellie A. Jones as age 25 and that she was an adopted daughter.
- Nellie was the only child living in the household.

Henry C. Jones Purchases Jones House in 1899

•1920 U.S. Census

- Henry C. Jones reported that he was 82 years old and had no occupation.
- He was living at 314 E. Madison Street.
- His wife, Mary A. Jones, was 68 years old.
- A minor, Ella Coleman, age 17, was living in the household.

Henry C. Jones Dies in Pontiac in 1921

PROMINENT PONTIAC BUSINESS MAN DIES

Henry C. Jones, Former Newspaper Publisher, Answers Final Summons

Pontiac, June 13. — Henry C. Jones, who first came to Pontiac in 1845 and a man who has always been closely associated with its history, died at 10 o'clock this forenoon at the family residence, 314 East Madison street. Death was due to pneumonia, he having been ill less than a week.

Widow Mary Jones continued to live in the Jones House

Widow Mary Jones Sells the House to Her Daughter in 1939

- According to the 1905-1977 Jones House partial abstract, on July 31, 1939, widow Mary A. Jones sold Lot 2 in Block 51 to her adopted daughter Nelle J. Hershey for \$2,000 in 1939.
- This sales price would be equivalent to \$43,300 in today's dollars.

Bloodline of Henry C. Jones Ends

1942 => Mary Jones, wife of Henry C. Jones, dies at age 90 in the Jones House

1944 => Mrs. Nelle Jones Hershey, 58, wife of Roy G. Hershey, secretary of Pontiac Chamber of Commerce, died Friday morning at St. James hospital following a short illness.

Husband Roy G. Hershey continues to live in house.

Henry C. Jones bloodline ends.

Jerry L. Maxwell enters the Story

•1950 U.S. Census

- Roy G. Hershey was 67 years old and was a minister in the clergy.
- He lived at 314 E. Madison Street in Pontiac.
- Also living in the household was Jerry L. Maxwell, 19 years of age. Jerry reported that he was born in Illinois.

Best guess => Jerry Maxwell was “troubled youth”
and Minister Hershey took him in to
complete his Senior year at Pontiac HS

Jerry L. Maxwell enters the Story



Jerry Maxwell and likely his Mother plus other family at Pontiac HS Graduation

Reverend Roy G. Hershey Dies in 1955

- In his Will, he leaves the Jones House to Jerry Maxwell
- Jerry Maxwell returns to Pontiac after probate with his wife
- They sell the house
- Gerald Lawrence Maxwell and his wife Ruth K. Maxwell sold the house to John H. and Naomi M. Koehler on November 13, 1957.

Major Fire at the Jones House in 1975



Major Fire at the Jones House in 1975



Kitchen and
south & east
porches
destroyed

House Sold to Francis E. Lehman and Reid Tombaugh in 1976

- According to the 1905-1977 Jones House partial abstract, the house was sold on April 21, 1976 to Mr. Lehman and Mr. Tombaugh.
- Mr. Koehler had apparently married again after his first wife died, because the house was sold by John H. Koehler and wife Bernice Koehler to Francis E. Lehman and Reid Tombaugh.
- No sales amount was given.
- Note that Francis E. Lehman had been the Executor of the estate of Roy G. Hershey when Mr. Hershey died in 1955.

House Ownership Transferred to the Historical Society in 1977

- Per the 1905-1977 Jones House partial abstract, two transactions were completed on June 3, 1977.
- In the first transaction, Ferne Lehman, widow of Francis E. Lehman, sold her husband's half-interest in the house to the Livingston County Historical Society.
- In the second transaction, Reid R. Tombaugh sold his half-interest in the house to the Historical Society.

Jones House Approved to be Added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1978

- John Lehman & John Perring, as representatives of the Livingston County Historical Society, initially submitted this application on April 22, 1977.
- House was accepted to the National Register even though house had not yet been repaired from the major fire!
- Many people and organizations helped to refurbish the Jones House

John Perring Illustration of the Jones House in 1983



Original copy donated to Society by his son in 2023

Jones House Restoration Completed in 1988

- Took 11 years to refurbish (1988 – 1977 = 11 years)
- Strevell House took 10 years (2018 – 2008 = 10 years)
- Both done on the “raise money as you go plan”.
- Physical work could have been done in less than 1 year.

Before & After Photos



Before Renovation



After Renovation

Before & After Photos



Before Renovation



After Renovation

Other Stories in the Book

- Story of oldest brick commercial building in Pontiac
- Jerry Maxwell family story
- Biographies for:
 - Thomas Googerty
 - Reid Tombaugh
 - John Lehman
 - John Perring
 - Pearle Sutherland
- 1869 Birds Eye View Map & Sanborn Maps

Unsolved Mysteries

- How Did Henry Jones Talk His Wife into Allowing Him to Go Gold Prospecting 3 times in California?
- Did Judge Henry Jones Leave Pontiac and Go To California to Avoid Paying His Debts?
- What was the cause of Death for Samuel Mooney?
- How Did John Dehner Accumulate Enough Money to Buy Indiana Farmland?

Unsolved Mysteries

- What Temptations did Joseph Dehner Face?
- What was Dehner Hall and Where Was it Located in Pontiac?
- Was John Dehner in business with E. R. Maples in 1863 in Pontiac?
- Which House is the Jones House in the 1869 Bird's Eye View of Pontiac
- Were There Big Porches Around the Jones House in the 1910 to 1923 Era?

Unsolved Mysteries

- Who Were the Parents of Henry Jones?
- The Historical Society has a Partial Abstract of Title for the Jones House from 1905 Through 1905. What Happened to the Older 1839 Through 1905 Portion of the Abstract?
- What Happened to All Three Children Adopted by Henry C. Jones?
- Why did Gerald Laurence Maxwell move to Pontiac and Live with Minister Roy Hershey in the Jones House in 1950?

Unsolved Mysteries

- Were There Two Different Henry Jones Living in Pontiac in the 1850s?

Thanks !

- Ron Baker and Brenda Thompson helped on writing the book 😊
- Barb Sear showed me how to find the 1850s property tax records in the old courthouse 😊
- Barb Sear also got me access to the Society Lock Box with old house abstracts 😊
- John L. Perring, son of John E. Perring (1920-2002) for reviewing the manuscript and donating items for the book and the Historical Society. 😊

Questions?

The Story of the Jones House in Pontiac, Illinois

Dale C. Maley

